Abstract

A flexible malleable shaft is made up of a plurality of prismatic shaft elements adjacent one another. A recess is formed in a proximal end of each shaft element, the recess defined along a transverse axis. A protrusion is formed in a distal end of each shaft element, the protrusion defined along a transverse axis. The transverse axes are oriented to one another such that adjacent like shaft elements are aligned with one another when a protrusion of one shaft element is aligned with a recess in an adjacent shaft element. A tension element secured to a distal end of the malleable shaft is in communication with a proximal end of the malleable shaft via an axial through hole. Additionally, a variable stiffness malleable shaft can accommodate the differential lengths of tension elements when applying force to transition the shaft.